

MISERY OF CHINESE WOMEN.

Infanticide a Common Way of Disposing of Surplus Girl Babies.

Special correspondence of The Florida Star.

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 8.—In no other matter do the Chinese display so much the difference between themselves and Caucasians as in their estimation and treatment of women. Our placing of women on a pedestal would be incomprehensible to a Chinaman—that is, if he were condescended to waste thought on foreigners. His women are to him merely chattels to be disposed of at will. He is, however, quite willing to allow them to work for him and, in fact, expects them to do so. As they are absolutely under the control of his will, they do what he expects.

This and the following remarks apply chiefly to the native mass of the population. Of course among the higher and wealthy classes the position of Chinese women is much lighter. High class women are treated as pets and have frequently some little education. They have, in fact, risen in the past to great power. The greatest power in China today is an old woman, the empress dowager.

From their very birth Chinese women are fated to an ill destiny. While the birth of a son is hailed in a Chinese household with rejoicing, that of a daughter is made the occasion of lamentations or is passed over in silence. The most convenient way to a Chinaman of getting rid of girl babies, especially if they come in too rapid succession, is to kill them, and this he does with great promptness either by dropping them into a canal or river or by exposure. In former times these were the accepted and usual ways of treating girls, but the missionaries have by their intervention, which the Chinese are so vigorously resenting at present, caused some amelioration of such horrible practices. They are still common, however, and the finding of a dead female infant causes no comment in China, but it must not be thought that the practice of this crime is commended by the Chinese themselves. We must give them the credit, faint though it be, of considering it a serious evil. It can only be abolished by raising the position of the adult Chinese women of the mass of the population, which seems at present a hopeless task.

The greatest article of Chinese faith is ancestor worship, and from this women, as an inferior class, are rigorously excluded. The Chinaman becomes an ancestor and a fit subject for future veneration only with the birth of a son. When, therefore, a daughter disappoints him by being born, he turns his rage against her. It is not always so, the usual proportion of daughters allowed to live being about two to five sons. A greater proportion is considered undesirable, and infanticide is the result.

It is impossible for an American to conceive the want of natural affection displayed toward a Chinese daughter. When a Chinese father is asked how many children he has, he enumerates his sons, his daughters being considered as so much property. They are articles of commerce, and their value is regulated by the law of supply and demand, and when there is a superfluity of girl babies their price is apt to drop to a point too low to pay for their maintenance. This is another cause of infanticide.

However, let us suppose that a Chinese girl has survived her unhappy birth and lives to grow up. She is known by the designation of "ya-tou," which means "slave girl," which is literally what she is and remains all her life. The narrowness of her existence can scarcely be described or imagined. She is compelled to work from the moment she becomes able to assist, be it ever so little, in the household or in the business occupation of her father. Chinese work is done almost wholly by hand, and Chinese women of the lower classes do much of it, especially in the cotton and silk industries.

Such a thing as education for a Chinese girl is unheard of and would be derided if suggested. Some tentative experiments in this line have been made by missionaries, with doubtful success. The supreme, overshadowing idea of a girl's parents is that she will be the future wife of some one, and all her life is directed to that end. They do not propose, therefore, to waste any money or valuable time on educating a girl who, when married, will be the property of her husband's family.

Over anything that can be written about Chinese women fall the saddening and frequently sickening shadows of degradation and misery. What can be said of a country where wife beating is the rule and where women are sold in open market? Wherever we turn, either to Chinese home life, to Chinese business or to Chinese customs of marrying or buying for marriage, it is necessary to use the same sad tone in referring to these poor creatures. Single life is unknown unless the Chinese girl is physically unable to work. But in this case she does not live to a marriageable age. Suicide is among the most common facts of Chinese native life.

There is no such thing as love or sentiment in low class or, generally, in all China. How can there be when the marriage is settled upon during the

childhood of the parties by their parents? Sometimes, indeed, Chinese parents, to use a stockbroking term, deal in "futures," and Chinese matches are made before the births of the contracting parties, and they result in marriages. Of course polygamy is the natural result—that is, if a man can afford two or more wives.

When a Chinese girl approaches marriageable age, which is, naturally, much lower than with us, the friends of the family begin to ask whether she is betrothed. This is regarded as the most natural question in the world and is put in this form, "Is she said?" If she is, all right; if not, her single condition is a standing reproach to her father and is remedied as soon as possible.

A Chinese bridegroom does not see his bride after the betrothal until she is brought to his house. The length of the intervening time depends entirely upon the family of the bridegroom. As in every affair of life, high or low, great or small, marriage is governed by ironclad customs and superstitions. What these customs are it is impossible to state with any degree of accuracy, for in the heterogeneous mass called China "customs vary every ten miles," according to the Chinese saying.

While in the south of China the bride is actually purchased by the parents of the boy, in some other parts the case is reversed, and what we know as a dowry is paid. But in this also there is no uniformity, and neighboring villages may, and frequently do, vary in custom. In passing it may be well to say a word as to this diversity of customs. It is generally agreed that it is due to the fact that China consisted formerly of a number of kingdoms, which have been united into the empire, leaving the customs unchanged and handed down from generation to generation. But even in this, as in all things Chinese, there is a discrepancy, for customs vary between places in the same district.

That "woman's work is never done" is an axiom all over the world, but nowhere true to a greater degree than in the Middle Kingdom. Women do literally everything in the line of rough labor; being inferior beings, fine work is not to be intrusted to their hands. Field work is so common as to seem their natural occupation, and in the cotton growing districts every step of the process of converting the raw cotton into cloth is carried on by female hands. They work side by side with the men during every minute of the day which can possibly be snatched from their household duties, and they work most of the night.

Suicides are frequent among Chinese women, as affording the only escape from their hard lot. Unmarried women die to escape marriage, which they know by hearsay to be even a worse form of slavery than their life in their parents' homes. In some districts in China girls hand themselves together and vow never to marry. Each band is about ten in number, and if one of them chances to be forced into marriage she escapes from her husband, and, with the other members of her sisterhood, jumps into the nearest river. When Chinese girls go to such extremes to avoid marriage, the state of womanhood in China may be much more easily imagined than described.

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MENTION THIS PAPER WHEN WRITING.

SHERIFF'S SALE.

Under and by virtue of an execution issued out of the circuit court of Brevard county in a cause entitled Kate Frink vs. W. G. Frink, as administrator of the estate of Catherine Stewart, deceased, I have levied upon and will sell at public auction during the legal hours of sale upon the

First Monday in September, A. D. 1900, in front of the court house door at Titusville, Florida, to the highest and best bidder for cash the following described real estate situated in Brevard county, Florida, to wit:

Lot "C," Berrell's addition to the town of Titusville, Florida, section 3, township 22, south of range 35 east.

Also, beginning at a point of the south boundary of lot No. nine (9), block "F," in said town of Titusville, thirty (30) feet from the west boundary of said lot and block, thence running east along said south boundary of said lot fifty (50) feet, and along south boundary of lot No. ten (10) ten (10) feet from west end, thence turning at an angle of ninety (90) degrees north, sixty (60) feet to the north boundary of lot No. (8) eight, thence west along said north boundary sixty (60) feet, and thence south sixty (60) feet to point of beginning, the same being parts of lots Nos. eight (8), nine (9) and ten (10), of block "F," as shown in the plat of the town of Titusville, executed by J. F. LeBaron, civil engineer, in 1880, and filed in the office of the clerk of the court of Brevard county, said land being in section 3, township 22, south of range 35 east, described deed book "L," page 260.

Also, commencing 72 chains and 73 links north of the township line dividing townships 25 and 27 and run north 7 chains and 65 links to section line, thence across the island from east to west, according to plat on record in the county clerk's office, in deed book "A," page 682, above land being in sections 23 and 34, township 26, south of range 37 east, described deed book B, page 373.

J. P. BROWN,
Sheriff Brevard County, Florida.

NOTICE.

To all whom it may concern:

Thirty days after this date I will, on behalf of the state of Florida, execute a tax deed to W. Kitching for the following described lands, to-wit: Lot 2, section 15, township 37, south of range 40 east, 58 acres, sold for taxes July 4th, 1898, unless good cause be shown me on or before the 6th day of September, 1900, why I should not issue said deed.

This August 6th, 1900. A. A. STEWART,
[SEAL] Clerk Circuit Court Brevard County, Florida.

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TIME TABLE NO. 27, IN EFFECT JUNE 25, 1900.

SOUTH BOUND (Read Down.)				(Read Up) NORTH BOUND.			
No. 36	No. 35	STATIONS.		No. 76	No. 32		
Daily	Daily			Daily	Daily		
4:05p	10:00a	Lv. Jacksonville	Ar.	7:30p	10:10a	Lv. Jacksonville	Ar.
5:15p	11:10a	Lv. St. Augustine	Ar.	8:20p	9:00a	Lv. St. Augustine	Ar.
5:25p	11:15a	Lv. St. Augustine	Ar.	8:15p	9:01a	Lv. St. Augustine	Ar.
5:57p	11:40a	Lv. Hastings	Ar.	5:40p	8:25a	Lv. Hastings	Ar.
6:12p	12:05p	Lv. East Palatka	Ar.	5:25p	8:12a	Lv. East Palatka	Ar.
6:40p	12:30p	Lv. Palatka	Ar.	5:00p	7:45a	Lv. Palatka	Ar.
6:50p	11:40a	Lv. Palatka	Ar.	5:45p	8:35a	Lv. Palatka	Ar.
7:25p	6:55a	Lv. San Mateo	Ar.	7:25p	6:55a	Lv. San Mateo	Ar.
6:15p	12:05p	Lv. East Palatka	Ar.	5:25p	8:10a	Lv. East Palatka	Ar.
7:42p	1:20p	Lv. Daytona	Ar.	4:02p	6:42a	Lv. Daytona	Ar.
7:53p	1:37p	Lv. Port Orange	Ar.	3:51p	6:31a	Lv. Port Orange	Ar.
8:05p	1:47p	Lv. New Smyrna	Ar.	3:41p	6:21a	Lv. New Smyrna	Ar.
8:20p	2:10p	Lv. Oak Hill	Ar.	3:20p	6:00a	Lv. Oak Hill	Ar.
2:30p	3:00p	Lv. Titusville	Ar.	3:00p		Lv. Titusville	Ar.
3:40p	3:40p	Lv. City Point	Ar.	1:55p		Lv. City Point	Ar.
3:50p	3:50p	Lv. Cocoa	Ar.	1:47p		Lv. Cocoa	Ar.
4:20p	2:10p	Lv. Rockledge	Ar.	1:40p		Lv. Rockledge	Ar.
4:30p	2:10p	Lv. Eau Gallie	Ar.	1:30p		Lv. Eau Gallie	Ar.
4:30p	2:10p	Lv. Melbourne	Ar.	1:03p		Lv. Melbourne	Ar.
5:04p	2:10p	Lv. Roseland	Ar.	12:20p		Lv. Roseland	Ar.
5:00p	2:10p	Lv. Sebastian	Ar.	12:22p		Lv. Sebastian	Ar.
5:58p	2:10p	Lv. St. Lucie	Ar.	11:35a		Lv. St. Lucie	Ar.
6:05p	2:10p	Lv. Fort Pierce	Ar.	11:25a		Lv. Fort Pierce	Ar.
6:27p	2:10p	Lv. Tibbatts	Ar.	11:00a		Lv. Tibbatts	Ar.
6:31p	2:10p	Lv. Eden	Ar.	11:00a		Lv. Eden	Ar.
6:35p	2:10p	Lv. Jensen	Ar.	1:55a		Lv. Jensen	Ar.
6:45p	2:10p	Lv. Stuart	Ar.	1:45a		Lv. Stuart	Ar.
7:15p	2:10p	Lv. Hobe Sound	Ar.	10:14a		Lv. Hobe Sound	Ar.
7:28p	2:10p	Lv. West Jupiter	Ar.	10:02a		Lv. West Jupiter	Ar.
8:02p	2:10p	Lv. West Palm Beach	Ar.	9:22a		Lv. West Palm Beach	Ar.
8:27p	2:10p	Lv. Boynton	Ar.	9:04a		Lv. Boynton	Ar.
8:30p	2:10p	Lv. Delray	Ar.	8:38a		Lv. Delray	Ar.
9:22p	2:10p	Lv. Fort Lauderdale	Ar.	8:00a		Lv. Fort Lauderdale	Ar.
10:07p	2:10p	Lv. Lemon City	Ar.	7:22a		Lv. Lemon City	Ar.
10:15p	2:10p	Lv. Miami	Ar.	7:15a		Lv. Miami	Ar.

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STATIONS.	No. 15	No. 17	No. 19	No. 21	No. 23	No. 25	No. 27	No. 29
	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Sun only	Sun only	Sun only	Daily
Lv. Jacksonville	7:10a	4:50p	7:00p	10:40p	9:30a	2:40p	7:00p	10:50a
Ar. Pablo Beach	7:45a	5:25p	7:35p	11:15p	10:05a	2:45p	7:35p	11:25a
Ar. Mayport			8:00p	11:40p	10:30a	3:00p		

STATIONS.	No. 16	No. 18	No. 20	No. 22	No. 24	No. 26	No. 28	No. 30	No. 34
	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Sun only	Sun only	Sun only	Daily
Lv. Mayport	5:40a			9:00p	8:00a	11:00a	5:40p		
Ar. Pablo Beach	6:05a	8:10a	5:50p	9:25p	8:25a	11:25a	5:25p	9:35p	3:00p
Ar. Jacksonville	6:40a	8:45a	6:25p	10:00p	9:00a	12:00p	6:00p	10:10p	3:35p

Between New Smyrna and Orange City Junction.

City Junction.					STATIONS.					No. 12	
No. 3	No. 1	STATIONS.			No. 2	No. 4	No. 11	STATIONS.		No. 12	No. 13
3:25p	10:40a	Lv.	New Smyrna	Ar.	2:05p	6:15p	7:00a	Lv.	Titusville	Ar.	1:25p
4:00p	11:51a	Lv.	Lake Helen	Ar.	1:20p	5:05p	7:13a	"	Mims	Lv.	1:12p
4:20p	12:09p	Lv.	Orange City	Ar.	1:10p	4:40p	8:25a	"	Osteen	Ar.	1:57a
4:25p	12:15p	Ar.	Orange City	Ar.	1:05p	4:40p	8:50a	"	Sanford	Ar.	1:35a
							9:34a	Ar.	Empire	Ar.	1:10a

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